

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 06313 130935Z

53

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00 FMC-01

DOTE-00 OC-05 CCO-00 /095 W
----- 114206

R 130840Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0078

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

ASMISSION GENEVA 1593

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COMUSFORJAPAN YOKOTA JA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJ: SPRING LABOR OFFENSIVE ENDS WITH PUBLIC CORP AND PRIV
RR SETTLEMENTS AROUND 14 PERCENT

REF: TOKYO 5664

SUMMARY: WHILE MANY SMALLER FIRMS STILL NEGOTIATING, LABOR'S
SPRING STRUGGLE ENDED EARLY MAY 13 WITH MAJOR PRIVATE RAIL-
WAYS SETTLING FOR 14.2 PERCENT (58 DOLLARS PER MONTH)
AVERAGE INCREASE. PUBLIC CORPORATIONS AND NATIONAL ENTER-
PRISES AND KOROKYO ACCEPTED ARIBTRATION AWARD APR 10 AVER-
AGING 14.13 PERCENT INCREASE--59 DOLLARS PER MONTH. INCREASES
THROUGHOUT PRIVATE SECTOR NOW EXPECTED TO AVERAGE AROUND
13 PERCENT WHEN SMALLER FIRMS SETTLE IN MID JUNE WHICH IS
WITHIN GOJ WAGE INCREASE GUIDELINES. MAJOR TRANSPORT STRIKES
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 06313 130935Z

NOW OVER, BUT SOME SMALLER PRIVATE RAIL LINES OUT APRIL 13

IN SCHEDULED 48 HOUR STRIKE. WHILE RAIL STRIKES MAY 8 THROUGH 10 INCONVENIENCED OVER 57 MILLION COMMUTERS AND TRAVELERS, UNLIKE 1973 THEY DID NOT TRIGGER COMMUTER RIOTS. END SUMMARY.

1. NINE MAJOR PRIVATE RAILROADS, AFTER FIRST REFUSING, ACCEPTED MEDIATION PROPOSAL OF CENTRAL LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION EARLY MAY 13, EARLY ENOUGH TO CALL OFF SECOND WAVE OF STRIKES SCHEDULED TO BEGIN THAT DAY. PRIVATE RR WORKERS UNION, SHITETSUSOREN, AGREED TO MEDIATION PROPOSAL EVENING OF MAY 12, ANNOUNCING YEN 17,000 PER MONTH WAS ABSOLUTE MINIMUM IT WOULD ACCEPT (AT YEN 292 TO ONE DOLLAR THE WAGE BOOST AVERAGED \$58.22. WHILE IN PERCENTAGE A HIGHER INCREASE THAT WON BY JNR WORKERS, IN DOLLARS THE PRIVATE RR SETTLEMENT WAS FOUR DOLLARS LOWER). MANAGEMENT AT FIRST REJECTED THE PROPOSAL THEN LATER ACCEPTED--LEAVING TOKYO PRESS TO PRESUME IT HAD CHECKED WITH GOJ AND RECEIVED ITS BLESSING.

2. SOHYO'S PUBLIC CORPORATION AND NATIONAL ENTERPRISE WORKERS COUNCIL (KOROKYO), WHICH HAD ORIGINALLY DEMANDED \$150 MONTHLY RAISES, FINALLY HAD TO ACCEPT AN ARBITRATION SETTLEMENT GIVING THEM IN AVERAGE \$58.93, 14.13 PERCENT COMPARED WITH 29.7 PERCENT THEY WON IN 1974. WITHIN KOROKYO, SETTLEMENTS RANGED FROM JNR WORKERS' UNIONS (KOKURO AND DORO) 13.51 PERCENT--\$62.09 (LOWEST IN PERCENTAGE BUT HIGHEST IN AMOUNT OF ALL KOKOKYO SETTLEMENTS) TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS (ZENDENTSU) 14.84 PERCENT--\$56.37 (HIGHEST IN PERCENTAGE BUT LOWEST IN AMOUNT).

3. NEITHER THE GOJ AGENCIES NOR KOROKYO OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED MEDIATION PROPOSAL THAT LATER BECAME BASIS FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT. BUT BOTH THE UNION AND MANAGEMENT UNOFFICIALLY LET THE SPECIAL LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION KNOW THEY COULD LIVE WITH THE PROPOSAL. THE COMMISSION THEN USING ITS LEGAL AUTHORITY, DECLARED THE MEDIATION PLAN TO BE AN ARBITRATION AWARD, THUS ENDING THE DISPUTE. WHILE THE GOJ AGENCIES CONCERNED CRITICIZED THE ARBITRATED SETTLEMENT, HIGHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS COMMENDED IT AS A FAIR COMPROMISE.

4. IMMEDIATELY UPON ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT SATURDAY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 06313 130935Z

MORNING ZENDENTSU AND ZENTEI (POSTAL WORKERS) CALLED OFF SPOT STRIKES; THE JNR OPERATION TOOK LONGER TO GET BACK INTO OPERATION, ALL TRAINS WERE NOT RUNNING NORMALLY AGAIN UNTIL THE NEXT DAY. ACCORDING TO A TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT, THE JNR STRIKE MAY 7-9 DENIED TRANSPORT TO 40 MILLION PERSONS AND COST THE GOJ OVER TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS. ON THE PEAK DAY WHEN BOTH JNR AND PRIVATE RAILWAYS WERE ON STRIKE, 57.5 MILLION RIDERS WERE AFFECTED.

5. WITH THE KOROKYO AND SHITETSUSOREN DISPUTES SETTLED, THE SOHYO-ORCHESTRATED SPRING LABOR OFFENSIVE FORMALLY ENDED; BUT THIS DID NOT MEAN EITHER AGE NEGOTIATIONS OR STRIKES WERE OVER. SEVERAL OF THE SMALLER RAIL LINES STRUCK MAY 13 TO ENFORCE THEIR DEMANDS OF AS MUCH AS THE MAJOR LINES HAD SETTLED FOR. THE SYNTHETIC CHEMICAL WORKERS (GOKAROREN) PRESIDENT AND FORMER SOHYO HEAD, OTA, DECLARED HE WOULD CALL TWO ONE-WEEK STRIKES IF NECESSARY TO WIN 20 PERCENT INCREASES. DENKIROREN WAS STILL ENGAGING IN SPOT STRIKES TO UP MANagements'S LAST OFFER OF AROUND NINE PERCENT. AND BESIDES THESE, THOUSANDS OF ENTERPRISE UNIONS IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED FIRMS HAD YET TO FIND A VIABLE MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN THE BIG UNION SETTLEMENTS OF AROUND 14 PERCENT AND THE INDIVIDUAL COMPANY'S ABILITY TO PAY. AS RE-CESSION HAS GENERALLY HIT SMALLER FIRMS HARDER, THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL NOT BE EASY. NON-UNIONIZED FIRMS WILL GRANT WAGE INCREASES REFLECTING TRENDS BUT NOT NECESSARY EQUAL TO THE SETTLEMENTS OF SMALLER UNIONS. AS A RESULT, THE ALREADY WIDE WAGE GAP BETWEEN LARGE, UNIONIZED FIRMS AND SMALL ENTERPRISES CAN BE EXPECTED TO WIDEN EVEN FURTHER. HODGSON

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